

1. What does it mean to “doubt our doubts?”
2. How do we recognize and recalibrate when we have unmet expectations in our relationship with God?
3. What does it mean that the least in the kingdom is greater than John the Baptist?
4. In what sense might doubt simply be “childishness” in disguise?
5. What would identify us as children of wisdom, as opposed to children sitting in the marketplace?

It would be inconsistent to require more justification for Christian belief than you do for your own, but that is frequently what happens. In fairness, you must doubt your doubts. My thesis is that if you come to recognize the beliefs which your doubts about Christianity are based, and if you seek as much proof from those beliefs as you seek from Christians for theirs, you will discover that your doubts are not as solid as they first appeared. — Tim Keller (Reason for God)

The final and perhaps most significant reason for John's doubt was his wrong expectation. John was a fiery preacher, warning of God's impending judgment and calling for repentance (cf. Luke 3:3–17). His warning of judgment picked up where the Old Testament ended (Mal. 4:1), and John expected the Messiah to execute that judgment on the wicked when He arrived.

But Jesus, instead of bringing destruction and judgment upon unbelievers, brought to them healing and compassion. The ax was not laid at the root of the trees, nor did the winnowing fork toss the chaff into the fire (Luke 3:9, 17). The Day of the Lord with all its fury and judgment of the wicked, had not arrived. That did not make sense to John, who had called for sinners to repent in order to avoid Messiah's soon and sudden judgment. — John MacArthur (MacArthur Commentary: Luke)

Great as John was, it is greater to participate in the kingdom than to announce it. We are not to conclude from this, however, that John himself is excluded. Luke 13:28 says that all the prophets will be in the kingdom. — Walter Liefeld (Expositor's Bible Commentary)

'But the least one in the kingdom of God is greater than he is.' It all amounts to Jesus saying that no one is greater than John except those who are greater than John! It's a formal contradiction—to make a point. John as the hinge of redemptive history outstrips all comers in greatness, but the most obscure believer in the age of fulfillment is 'greater' than John. How are we to understand this?

An analogy may help. Susan B. Anthony worked avidly for women's suffrage in the United States. She died, however, in 1906, fourteen years before the 19th Amendment was adopted. She campaigned for women's right to vote and yet never enjoyed that right herself. She was, I suppose we could say, very 'great' in the suffrage movement. And yet a post-1920 northwestern Iowa farm wife was 'greater' than Susan B. Anthony because she enjoyed the privilege of voting. — Dale Ralph Davis (Luke: The Year of the Lord's Favor)

The way in which many respond to biblical teaching is clearly exposed. No matter what approach you take, no matter which biblical truths you emphasize—those which are hard and austere or those which are kind and loving, it really doesn't matter. When one's mind is set on doing as he pleases, when he is satisfied with his own self-righteousness, he will always invent excuses for not heeding God's Word. Usually, too, he will attack the messenger. You haven't been counseling very long if you haven't discovered these things to be true. — Jay Adams (The Christian Counselor's Commentary)